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“Risk Factors” in Action: The Situated Constitution of “Risk” in Violent Interactions

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Running Head

“Risk Factors” in Action

Author Note

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Abstract

Objectives: The objective of this report was to consider some ways in which a range of phenomena commonly treated as “risk factors” for violence (including social asymmetries based on factors such as gender, race and class; and drug or alcohol intoxication) become observable in violent (or potentially violent) interactions. In doing so, we contribute to a growing body of research focused on moving beyond cataloguing factors abstractly associated with risk for violent outcomes, toward specifying the ways in which these risk factors are constituted in “doing violence” itself. **Methods:** We employed an ethnomethodological and conversation analytic approach to examine the sequential unfolding of interactions in which violent actions are projected and/or realized, drawing on a collection of 105 videos downloaded from the video sharing site YouTube. **Results:** Our analysis demonstrates how participants in the interactions orient to or deploy “risk factors” as resources for the production of actions and/or for interpreting or accounting for the actions of themselves and others both prior to, during or following the production of violent actions. **Conclusions:** The findings demonstrate that the target phenomena, rather than simply being abstracted “risk factors” (in a distal or “upstream” sense), are constitutive features of the *in situ* unfolding of conflicts in which violence comes to be projected (if not always realized) as an outcome. As a result, the ontological distance between “risk” and “enactments” of violence effectively dissolves when episodes in which these phenomena appear are subjected to detailed analysis.

Keywords: Risk factors; violence; interaction; conversation analysis

“Risk Factors” in Action: The Situated Constitution of “Risk” in Violent Interactions

In keeping with the public health approach to non-communicable diseases and injuries, violence, once considered an inevitable part of the human condition, has become a target of study and intervention by the prevention sciences (Butchart, 2011). Rather than conceptualizing violence as reducible to a set of psychogenic constructs, this relatively new orientation claims the phenomenon as an emergent, preventable outcome resulting from interactions between complex causal pathways in time and space across human systems (Williams & Donnelly, 2014). This conceptual shift has far-reaching implications. Approaching violence as the outcome of intersecting socio-ecological arrangements rather than intransigent psychological factors means that a new set of relationships between violence, the social world, and the individual can be prioritized for study. Under this population-based, prevention-focused model, violence is likened to a host of other threats to public health that have been controlled by interventions informed by epidemiological methods (Mercy, Rosenberg, Powell, Broome, & Roper, 1993).

The use of these methods for understanding violence has generated an important range of factors associated with increased risk for violent outcomes. In line with a public health based framework, these “risk factors,” defined as “pattern[s] of behavior or physical characteristic[s] of a group of individuals that increase the probability of the future occurrence of one or more diseases in that group relative to comparable groups without or with different levels of the behavior or characteristic” (Rothstein, 2003, p. 2), have been classified according to their temporal and geographical proximity to the act of violence itself. Variables such as personality type, assumed to inhere “within” the individual(s) who are victims or perpetrators of violence, are conventionally classified as factors most “proximal” to the event, while society-level factors such as socio-cultural norms are commonly classified as more “distally” associated with acts of

violence (Matzopoulos, Bowman, Mathews, & Myers, 2010). The degree to which any risk factor can be discretely anchored to any spatiotemporal point or classified within a particular socio-ecological level, the possibility of conceptually disconnecting these points and levels from each other, and indeed the utility of the socio-ecological approach for understanding the cultural complexities that characterize risk factors for general health outcomes (Krieger, 2008; Schölmerich & Kawachi, 2016), and violence in particular (Chan, Hollingsworth, Espelage, & Mitchell, 2016), have all been strongly contested. Despite these debates, there is a general consensus amongst social scientists that although risk factors may not necessarily be directly involved in the etiological processes that result in violence, they stand in as temporal, spatial, and/or conceptual proxies for its potentially “unknown causes” (Perry, 2009; Rothstein, 2003).

Enhancing the picture of violence

Although some risk factors may be particular to specific forms of violence, most forms of violence share a significant number of associated risks (Krug & Dahlberg, 2002). Neurological deficits, personality disorders, impulsivity, prior exposure to abuse, and the misuse of alcohol and drugs are all associated with increased risk for violence at the individual level (Farrington, 1998). At the relationship level, risks for violence are related to poor parenting, low socio-economic status, and early motherhood and family size (Kashani, Jones, Bumby, & Thomas, 1999). High residential mobility, cultural heterogeneity, social isolation and population density are all considered community-level risk factors for violence (Almgren, 2005). The most distal or “upstream” structural or societal correlates of violence include socio-cultural inequality (associated with, for example, race, ethnicity, class, and gender), concentrations of poverty, and cultural (especially gender) norms that support violence (Krug & Dahlberg, 2002; Matzopoulos

et al., 2010). This focus on the identification and description of risk factors has driven the agenda for health-based approaches to the study of violence and its prevention over the last two decades. Notwithstanding the considerable gains afforded by such research, there have been recent calls for augmenting risk factor identification in advancing contemporary understandings of the causes and consequences of violence (Bowman, Stevens, Eagle, & Matzopoulos, 2015). One key strategy in responding to these calls is to focus on enhancing the resolution of the current epidemiological picture of violence through studies that examine precisely how upstream (distal) risk factors and downstream (proximal) variables interact *in situ* to produce violent outcomes.

Some authors have pointed to the conceptual difficulties in isolating these inter-system interactions because the aggregation of effects at each nested level represent potentially incommensurable units for any integrated analysis (Diez-Roux, 1998; Susser, 1994). Others have argued that simply using risk factors risk as proxies for spatiotemporal “distances” from the disease in question (Krieger, 2008) represents a fundamental misunderstanding of systems theory. While these are important distinctions in the growing field of philosophy of epidemiology, what unites these standpoints is their treatment of risk factors as abstracted characteristics of the event being studied. More pointedly, they are treated analytically in this literature as exogenous to the observable features of violent events (Schinkel, 2004).

Situation-Sensitive Approaches

There have been various attempts to address the challenges associated with cataloguing risk factors so “distal” to the violent event that they lack any discernible discriminant value for understanding violence in particular, as opposed to any number of other “diseases” of which they are also correlates (Broadbent, 2013). Approaches that focus on situational features of violence

have historically highlighted those variables and interactions described as proximal in violence studies (Birkbeck & LaFree, 1993; Wilkinson & Hamerschlag, 2005). These approaches have been empirically informed primarily by survey or interview-based studies aimed at examining situational variables through manipulating vignettes in quasi-experiments (e.g., Willits, 2015), focusing on the event as the unit of analysis in national crime datasets (e.g., Felson & Messner, 1996) and extracting situational data from victim and perpetrator accounts of violent events (e.g., Lindegaard, Bernasco, & Jacques, 2014). While these and similar studies focus on the situation as the unit of analysis, they do not observe violence directly, thereby being similarly subject to the challenges of abstraction faced by more “distal” studies of violence. Recent theoretical and empirical advances in micro-sociological approaches to violence, facilitated by improved surveillance and other recording technologies, have sought to circumvent these challenges in focusing on the observable situational features of enactments of violence. A prominent example of these efforts is the work of Collins (2008, 2009), who has drawn on fine-grained analyses of video and photographic evidence to argue that enacting violence is difficult because it requires overcoming a “naturally” inhibitory *confrontational tension/fear (ct/f)*. According to this analysis, the high degree of emotional labor required to “successfully” achieve violence in the face of a range of situation-bound obstacles, in a population regularly exposed to a multitude of risk factors, explains why violence remains a comparatively rare event.

There can be no doubt that both Collins (2008, 2009) and subsequent research drawing on his theorizing (e.g., Nassauer, 2016; Weenink, 2014) have offered promising insights into the ways that distal and proximal risks for violence are neither necessary nor sufficient factors in accounting for the complexity inherent in the situation-bound unfolding of violent events. However, these studies have drawn attention primarily to intra-individual psychological

(especially emotional) features of conflict relating to a single moment at which barriers to violence are overcome, rather than to unfolding interactional (inter-individual) features and processes. In contrast, the approach we employ in the present study draws on ethnomethodological (Garfinkel, 1967) and conversation analytic (Schegloff, 2007) methods, which are characterized by their focus on both situation specific analyses and attention to the moment-by-moment interactional unfolding of the situations at hand.

An additional important feature of the approach we employ relates to its treatment of the types of factors analyzed as risks for violence in the research described in the previous section. That is, in contrast to analyses of these factors as *explanatory* (i.e., independent) variables associated with violent outcomes (which are thereby treated as dependent variables), ethnomethodologists focus on the ways in which they may instead be constituted as *outcomes* produced by the situated activities of participants in everyday interactions (Garfinkel, 1967) – which for our purposes includes interactions in which violence is a projected or actual outcome, and is thus also examined as a product of participants’ situated activities. Consistent with this central ethnomethodological principle, conversation analytic research is characterized by its use of participants’ orientations and conduct as primary bases for empirically grounding analytic claims regarding the relevance of demographic categories or individual attributes (Schegloff, 1997), thereby similarly treating such characteristics as contingent products of participants’ actions rather than explanatory categories to be supplied by the researcher. Similarly, other contextual details, such as those relating to geographical locations, physical environment, temporality (e.g., time of day), which are analyzed in other approaches as independent variables associated with particular outcomes (including various types of violence), are treated in conversation analytic research as situated productions. As such, they are addressed analytically if

and when participants demonstrably orient to them, rather than being coded and analyzed as globally (potentially) relevant across an entire data set (Schegloff, 1997).

Several decades of ethnomethodological and conversation analytic research have demonstrated the value of applying these principles across a range of domains that intersect with the types of social-structural asymmetries and individual-level characteristics commonly (as described above) treated as risk factors for violence. For example, ethnomethodological research building on Garfinkel's (1967) pioneering analysis of the situated accomplishment of gender, have presented a reconceptualization of asymmetries based on gender, race and class as ongoing interactional accomplishments rather than merely ascribed or quantitatively measured attributes (West & Fenstermaker, 1995; West & Zimmerman, 1987). Moreover, conversation analytic studies based on Schegloff's (1997) principles have demonstrated how participants in interactions can use gender, race, and class categories (Stokoe, 2009; Whitehead, 2012, 2013), as well as "individual-level" attributes such previous life experiences (Pino, 2017), as resources for producing actions and interpreting the actions of others. However, to our knowledge no research has used ethnomethodological and conversation analytic methods to examine how factors such as these are produced or oriented to by participants specifically in interactions in which violence either occurs or is projected (by the participants) as a potential outcome.

In light of these considerations, we examine in the present study a range of ways in which some of the "risk factors" for violence discussed above are oriented to or deployed by participants as resources for the production of actions, and/or for interpreting or accounting for the actions of themselves and others, at various stages of conflicts both prior to and following the production of violent actions. We thereby work to return these aspects of social structure to the hands of the participants, examining how they are produced as consequential in, and as, locally

organized occasions of interaction. In doing so, we demonstrate that, rather than simply being abstracted proxies for risk (in the distal or “upstream” sense in which they are treated in the abovementioned literature), they are constitutive features of the unfolding of conflicts in which violence comes to be projected (if not always realized) as an outcome, with the conceptual distinction between “risk” and “enactment” (Bowman et al., 2015) thereby effectively dissolving when the episodes in which these phenomena appear are subjected to detailed analysis. Specifically, we address the following research question: When and how do participants in interactions observably produce, use, or orient to those factors conventionally described as correlates or predictors of potential or actual violent actions?

Method

Sample

The data excerpts we examine below are part of a set of what Jones and Raymond (2012, p. 112) have described as “opportunistic third party video”, referring to recordings produced by observers of isolated incidents for purposes other than to serve as research data. The videos were downloaded from the video hosting website YouTube, which enables users to post videos and make them publicly accessible. The videos were purposively sampled (Silverman & Marvasti, 2008) using search terms such as “violence,” “fight,” “conflict,” and “argument,” with the videos collected including both interactions in which violent actions were produced and those in which violence was threatened or projected but ultimately did not occur. The videos were screened in order to include only those in which the participants observably oriented to the types of phenomena described as “risk factors” in the literature discussed above (including gender, race, class, and drug or alcohol intoxication), and to exclude videos showing scripted interactions

(e.g., from films or television shows). Sampling continued to a point of “saturation,” whereby additional cases provided no new information or variation in terms of the research question (Morse, 1995). This occurred after approximately 40 videos were collected, but data collection has continued as part of a broader study of which the present study forms a part, with 105 videos that meet the inclusion criteria for the present study having been collected at the time of writing.

It is important to note that, in keeping with our methodological framework, this sample is not intended or claimed to be statistically representative or generalizable in terms of attributes such as demographic characteristics of participants, features of settings, or typologies of conflict or violence. Instead, and in line with our research question, the sample is designed to allow for the description of robust patterns at the intersection of structural positions in sequences of interaction and mechanisms through which participants’ orientations to the phenomena of interest may become observable, independently of prevalence rates. As Kendon (1990, p. 47) notes, “If order can be demonstrated in the examination of just a few specimens of interaction, this is taken to be one of the orders that humans employ in interaction. The frequency with which it occurs is not taken as an index of the firmness with which its reality can be believed in.”

Procedure

The ethnomethodological and conversation analytic approach we employed offers well-established resources for the analysis of video data (e.g., Goodwin, 1993; Heath, Hindmarsh, & Luff, 2010). This approach focuses on the fine-grained details of the sequential unfolding of interactions, using collections of cases compiled on the basis of the presence of shared features with respect to interactional phenomena of interest, including interactional practices, actions, or features of participants’ talk or other conduct (Schegloff, 1996). In keeping with this fine-grained

focus, our analysis was aided by detailed transcripts produced using the symbols developed by Gail Jefferson to represent features of the participants' talk and other conduct. A list of symbols used in our transcripts is also included as an appendix, and a comprehensive glossary and discussion of the approach to transcription is available in Jefferson (2004). The videos are also available to view online (at <https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B-HfoG1fYZwBOGhSZkVUU1NpYTA>), to enable readers to assess our analysis based on independently viewing the evidence presented in support of claims. The title of each transcribed excerpt includes the verbatim title of the video as it appeared on YouTube, since in many cases these titles (as we demonstrate in our analysis) provide additional evidence of participants' orientations and evaluations with respect to the events portrayed in the videos. All names used to refer to the participants in the analysis are pseudonyms.

While our analysis is based on identified recurrent features of multiple exchanges within the data set, we have used excerpts from one particular exchange throughout the analysis (see excerpts 1, 3, 6 and 7) in order to demonstrate how the phenomena we examine unfold in a single case. The line numbering for these excerpts is continuous in order to indicate the location of the excerpts relative to one another in the exchange as a whole. In addition, we have provided additional detailed analyses of excerpts from a number of other exchanges that demonstrate the robustness of, and variations in, the phenomena at hand. In these cases, the line numbering of the excerpts starts at 1 even when the excerpts begin after the beginning of the video.

Ethical Considerations

The use of video data raises ethical questions relating to the protection of the participants, particularly given that obtaining their informed consent would not be feasible in light of our own

inability to identify and contact them. Although the American Psychological Association (APA) code of ethics does not specifically address the use of videos obtained from online sites, such sources constitute a type of (virtual) “public place” due to being freely accessible to anyone with an internet connection. They thus fall within the scope of the principle that informed consent is not required when “the research consists solely of naturalistic observations in public places and it is not anticipated that the recording will be used in a manner that could cause personal identification or harm” (APA, 2017, p. 11). While there may be risks of personal identification arising from using the videos as research data, these risks are no greater than those already present as a result of the public accessibility of the videos on YouTube.

In addition to their portrayal in some cases of violent actions, the videos, and thus our transcripts thereof, contain numerous instances of profane language, including racialized and gendered slurs. Some readers may find these aspects of their content disturbing, and forewarning of this possibility is thus warranted. However, in light of the centrality of these very features as objects of our analysis, we have retained them in unedited form in the videos and transcripts.

Findings

In the sections that follow, we examine some ways in which the phenomena analyzed in the literature discussed above as “risk factors” become observable at various points in the unfolding of the conflicts captured in our data. As noted above, in contrast to their typical use in the literature as *social scientists’* concepts, our analysis considers how these phenomena are deployed or oriented to as *participants’* resources for the production of actions and/or for interpreting or accounting for their own or others’ actions. In keeping with this analytic orientation, we enclose the term “risk factors” in quotation marks throughout our analysis, in

order to highlight the distinction between the use of this term in the literature we have discussed and our analysis of these factors as constitutive features of the exchanges we examine.

Initiating Conflicts

In this section, we examine some ways in which participants collaboratively produce one or more “risk factors” as accountable bases for the initiation of conflicts in which violence comes to be projected as a possible or likely outcome. Excerpt 1 shows the initiation of a conflict between two passengers on a bus, one of whom appears (based on his consistently slurred speech and other conduct) to be intoxicated.

(1) [44 – “Black Man Knock Mexican Out For Using The N Word”; 00:03-00:07]

01 A: (What) nigger (what?) ((slurring))
02 (0.5)
03 ?: ([])
04 A: [NIGG]E[R:!]
05 B: [(Who)] the fuck you talkin' to ma:n?
06 ?: (Shut the fuck [up!])
07 A: [Huh] huh huh huh

Shortly after the beginning of the video, this passenger, Alberto (designated on the transcript as A, and shown on camera at the beginning of the video), repeatedly and loudly utters a racial slur (lines 1 and 4), and a second passenger, Bob (B, not shown on camera at this point) responds with a challenge (see Koshik, 2003) produced in partial overlap with the second utterance of this slur (line 5). This challenge by Bob treats Alberto’s prior utterances as a purposeful attack on him, with Bob’s use of profanity adding further force to it. It also initiates

“repair” (see Schegloff, 1987) on Alberto’s use of the slur, treating it as problematic and providing Alberto with an opportunity to withdraw his utterance or apologize, while foreshadowing what may happen if he declines this opportunity. This pair of actions thus projects an incipient conflict, with both the potentially offensive utterance by Alberto and the challenging response by Bob being necessary components for the conflict to be observably initiated (see Cresswell, Whitehead, & Durrheim, 2014). As such, the racial slur produced by Alberto observably serves, in its situated reproduction of race-based social asymmetry and through Bob’s forceful response to it, as the basis for the initiation of a conflict in this case. Moreover, Bob’s treatment of Alberto’s action as an attack (rather than, for example, as a joke, as proposed by Alberto through his laughter at line 7), suggests the importance of action ascription (Levinson, 2013) as an interactional basis for the realization of “risk factors” as such.

The unfolding of the initiation of conflicts is available in relatively few cases in our data set, largely as a result of the filming of exchanges tending to commence only once a conflict is already observably underway. However, even in cases where the initiation of the conflict is not included in the video footage, there may be evidence of participants’ treatment of “risk factors” as centrally important features of the genesis of conflicts. An example of this is shown in excerpt 2, in which the participants treat a just-initiated conflict as arising from a racist action combined (albeit only implicitly) with a protagonist’s intoxicated state and performance of masculinity. This orientation is also reflected in the video’s YouTube title, which strikingly parallels the title of the video shown in excerpt 1 in proposing that the video depicts a “White man knocked out for using k word” (“k word” is a euphemism in South Africa for the extreme racial slur “kaffer”, and is thus used similarly here to “The N Word” in the title of the video in excerpt 1).

(2) [6 – “White man knocked out for using k word”, 00:07-00:19]

01 (A): [(I will knock you out!)]

02 D: [Hey! Come here!] Hey! [HEY!]

03 B: [() better not [() me.]

04 A: [(Hey,)]

05 B: What do you think-

05 (C): (Leave it there.)

06 D: Come here::! [(.hh) Lea::ve them! Le[ave the]m alone!]

07 C: [(talk about- talk[about)]

08 E: [Are] you a]

09 <ra[cist?>]

10 B: [Just hold here.]

11 (0.2)

12 A: Wh[at do you mean by "the blackies (")]

13 D: [No you're not! You're not! You're not!]

14 D: You'r[e not! You're not gonna do it!]

15 A: [HUH? WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY "the] blackies are coming"?

16 (0.2)

17 A: What do y- (Huh?)

The transcript starts from the beginning of the video recording, which shows Brad confronting Anele, who issues a threat of violence toward Brad (line 1). Brad then thrusts a hand toward Anele's face while Cebo and Dave initially look on and then attempt to restrain Brad, both verbally (lines 2, 5, 6, and 7) and physically. As the exchange unfolds, a bystander (Esihle, not shown on camera) displays an interpretation of the conflict as resulting from a racist action, asking the accusatory question (apparently directed at Brad), "Are you a racist?" (lines 8-9).

Shortly after Esihle produces this question, Anele asks a similarly accusatory question (line 12) that proposes that Brad has targeted him with a racial epithet, and challenging Brad on

that basis (cf. the challenge produced by Bob in excerpt 1). Anele then pursues a response to the question by repeating it at a raised volume (line 15; also see line 17), thereby escalating the force of his challenge. Anele thereby aligns with Esihle's orientation to the conflict as resulting from a racist action, thereby providing a situated account for both his display of anger and his actions in confronting and pursuing an account from Brad. In addition, the challenges Anele produces here retrospectively treat the violence projected by his threat at line 1 as being responsive to the same racist action he has now treated as initiating the conflict. In this regard, it is noteworthy that the utterance Anele attributes to Brad in this exchange ("the blackies are coming") takes the form of a comment directed to another (white) person (apparently Dave), but produced in such a way that that Anele would overhear it. Thus, if produced in this way, the utterance would effectively comment on Anele while excluding him as a direct recipient, with Brad thereby conveying a sense of race-based inequality relative to Anele, such that he is prepared to openly target him with a racialized comment while simultaneously excluding him as potential interlocutor.

While Brad's audibly slurred speech throughout the video provides evidence that he was intoxicated at the time of the incident, there is also subtle evidence in this excerpt for at least one other participant's orientation to him as such. This can be seen in the impatient or exasperated tone of Dave's repeated summonses of Brad (lines 2 and 6), followed by the directives he issues (line 6), and his insistence that Brad is "not gonna do" what he has projected through his actions thus far (line 13) – which also displays Dave's recognition that (particularly in light of Brad taking his sunglasses off his head and attempting to hand them to Dave at lines 10-11) Brad is pursuing a trajectory toward a violent outcome. These actions by Dave may thus implicitly convey a sense that Brad is acting on the basis of the kind of impaired judgment (such as that

which would be commonly understood to result from alcohol or drug intoxication) that would warrant forceful interventions of this nature.

In addition to suggesting an implicit orientation to Brad as intoxicated, the tone of Dave's interventions may also be evidence of an orientation to Brad's performance of a recognizably exaggerated and extreme form of aggressive masculinity associated with the use of (threats of) violence as a means of asserting dominance over other men (Willer, Rogalin, Conlon, & Wojnowicz, 2013). To the extent that this is the case, Dave may thus be oriented to Brad's aggressive actions as grounded in a dangerous intersection of alcohol and masculinity in addition to the primary, racial, basis of the conflict that is more explicitly in evidence, as described above.

These excerpts thus demonstrate how "risk factors" associated with social asymmetries (in these cases expressed through racial slurs), gender, and intoxication become either explicitly or implicitly observable in the actions of participants in the initiation and early unfolding of conflicts with projected violent outcomes. Such "risk factors" can thus be recognized as participants' resources for producing their own actions and interpreting or accounting for others' actions. As such, rather than operating as "driving forces" or "causes" operating "behind the backs of participants" (Maynard, 2003, p. 71), and independently of the interactions in which conflict and violence occur, these phenomena are constitutive features of these exchanges as a result of their active use by participants. Moreover, in contrast to Collins' (2008, 2009) discussion of the psychological barriers mitigating against the production of violent actions, these exchanges provide evidence for a potential normative push *toward* violent confrontations in situations where they are interpreted as warranted by the actions of another party. That is, *not* confronting a person who has produced racist utterances may be considered accountably remiss, especially when one is the target of the racist conduct. In the sections that follow, we continue to

develop this analysis of the interactional constitution of “risk factors” by examining how they become observable at subsequent places in the unfolding trajectories of conflicts.

Pursuing and Escalating Conflicts

While the bases for initiation of conflicts can include actions or events that are not observably associated with “risk factors” of the sorts discussed in the previous section, these “risk factors” can, independently of how a conflict has been initiated, also serve as resources for pursuing or escalating conflicts toward violent outcomes. Participants can thus use these resources in order to prospectively build accounts for eventual violent actions. This can be seen in excerpt 3, a continuation of excerpt 1 resuming approximately 13 seconds after the end of excerpt 1. In the intervening period, Bob has left his seat and moved to stand in front of Alberto (who remains seated), displaying an orientation to confronting and potentially taking further action against Alberto, and thus escalating the conflict whose initiation was shown in excerpt 1.

(3) [44 – “Black Man Knock Mexican Out For Using The N Word”; 00:21-00:38]

22 E: Why don't you get the hell off?

23 B: (Ride) man, let's go.

24 (1.0)

25 B: Let's go (there.)

26 (0.5)

27 B: HEY MA'AM DO YOU (WANT HIM OFF HERE?)

28 (0.8)

29 B: COS I AIN'T GONNA TAKE TOO MUCH O' DIS “NIGGER” STUFF.

30 (2.2)

31 A: (She f[i:ne]) ((slurring))

32 B: [()] off the bus, man.

33 A: (Sorry!/It's alright!)
34 (.)
35 F: She wants you off the bus, bro.
36 B: Let's go, man. [She (said go), off the bus.)
37 F: [(>This is<) your stop right here, bro.]

In lines 22-25 Bob collaborates with another passenger (Eric) in directing Alberto to leave the bus, with Alberto not responding to these directives and showing no sign of complying during two relatively lengthy pauses during which some response from him was relevant (lines 24 and 26). Following this non-compliance, Bob apparently directs a question to the bus driver, asking whether she wants Alberto to leave the bus (line 27), thereby apparently seeking an institutional warrant from the driver to enforce Alberto's compliance. However, there is also possible evidence of an orientation to gender in the way Bob addresses the driver as "ma'am", in contrast to the previous gendered way addressing of Alberto as "man" (line 23). Gender is thus produced as an available, if not directly articulated, account for the unfolding exchange, with Bob possibly orienting to and performing features of masculinity by confronting Alberto and proposing his removal from the bus on behalf of the (female) driver – with the use of force implicitly projected as one means of achieving this outcome.

Following a pause (line 28) after his question, Bob provides an account (line 29) that explicitly identifies the racial slurs Alberto has uttered as being the basis of his actions both in confronting him and in seeking a warrant to remove him from the bus. Importantly, this account also implicitly serves as a prospective warning or threat of the further actions he may take if his demands are not met. Bob thus both projects the possibility of subsequent violent actions

(particularly if Alberto were to subsequently produce further racial slurs), and provides a prospective account for such actions by reference to the racist utterances Alberto has produced.

In lines 31-37, Bob, in collaboration with another passenger (Fred) continues to direct Alberto to leave the bus (lines 32 and 35-37), while Alberto continues to show no sign of compliance, instead producing some only partially intelligible (due to his slurred speech) utterances that may be explicit refusals to comply (lines 31 and 33). There is further evidence for possible orientations to gender on the part of the participants, in the form of the gendered terms “man” and “bro” they use in addressing Alberto (lines 32, 35, 36, and 37) and in their use of the pronoun “she” in their production of their directives as being on behalf of the female driver (lines 35 and 36). There is also evidence of Alberto’s intoxication in his slurred speech, and possibly a subtle orientation to this by Bob and Fred in the way they repeatedly cajole him to leave the bus, thereby possibly treating him as having impaired ability to follow their instructions.

In excerpt 4, a participant (Arno) more directly and concerted, over a sustained series of turns, uses gendered insults as resources in the service of provoking a response from Bheki, with whom he has been pursuing a conflict. It is noteworthy that this conflict is evidently, at least in part, underpinned by class-based asymmetries, with Arno (a motorist and thus of a relatively high class status in the South African context in which the exchange took place) berating Bheki (a pump attendant at a filling station) for having made an error in filling his vehicle. (These class asymmetries are also possibly overlaid with racial asymmetry between the white motorist and black pump attendant, although the participants in this exchange treat race as a relevant factor only implicitly, if at all.) The participants’ orientations to these asymmetrical positions has been observable prior to the transcribed section of the exchange, with Arno persistently insulting and using profanity toward Bheki, and Bheki producing designedly conciliatory responses or not

responding at all. These patterns continue in lines 1-4 of the excerpt, as Arno continues to pursue a response from Bheki (lines 1 and 3), while Bheki continues to withhold a response (lines 2 and 4). Arno then shifts to the use of gendered insults in pursuit of a response (see lines 5, 7, and 9), with Bheki eventually responding to the third of these with an objection (line 11) that displays a more active engagement on his part in the conflict, and thus a possible shift to a trajectory that more strongly projects a violent outcome than had previously been the case.

(4) [40 – “Rage over R200 worth of petrol”; 01:21-01:46]

((English translations provided in italics on lines below Afrikaans talk))

01 A: EK SE JOU JY’S ‘N FOKKEN NAAI, WAT WIL JY MAAK?

I’m telling you you’re a fucking fuck, what do you want to do?

02 (.)

03 A: WAT WIL JY MAAK?

What do you want to do?

04 (.)

05 A: JY’S ‘N POES JY!

You’re a cunt you!

06 (0.5)

07 A: Jy’s ‘n POES!

You’re a cunt.

08 (0.8)

09 A: FOK JOU! JOU MA SE POES!

Fuck you! Your mom’s cunt!

10 (0.5)

11 B: [Don’t start with (my ma.)]

12 A: [Wat wil jy- (.hh) WAT WIL J]Y MAAK MAN!

What do you want- What do you want to do man!

13 B: Don’t (sho[ut with] my [ma!])

14 A: [HE:Y!] [>WAT WIL JY MAAK, JOU MA S[E POES!]
What do you want to you, your mom's cunt!

15 B: [DON'T (START]

16 THIS) W[ITH MY MA!]

17 A: [JOU MA SE] STINK POES!
Your mom's smelly cunt!

18 B: HEY PAPA DON'T (SH[OUT THIS WITH MY MA THERE MAN!])

19 A: [WA:T WIL JY MAA:K?]
What do you want to do?

20 (0.3)

21 A: Tell me what you wanna do.

22 B: Don't shout m- [with my mother.

23 A: [Plea::se I'm asking you, tell me what you wanna
24 do. <Fok jou en jou ma.
Fuck you and your mom.

25 (.)

26 A: En jou pa, en jou sussie, en jou ou:ma, .hh jou fokken
And your dad, and your sister, and your grandma, your fucking
27 *↑alles, jou poes jy.*
everything, you cunt you.

28 (0.8)

29 A: Fokken poes.
Fucking cunt.

30 (0.5)

It is noteworthy how Arno successively escalates his deployment of these gendered insults following Bheki's continued withholding of responses, from one directed at Bheki (line 5, repeated at line 7), to one referring to Bheki's mother's genitals (line 9) – an utterance that, as

well as being highly gendered and profane, is commonly recognized in South Africa (as in many other countries) as extraordinarily provocative. It is thus apparent that Arno's escalatory actions are designed to provoke a robustly confrontational response from Bheki that would more clearly move toward a violent outcome (as was the case with the responses observed in excerpts 1 and 2). In light of this, it is significant that Arno's utterance at line 9 is the one that finally draws Bheki into an oppositional response (line 11), with Bheki explicitly treating the mention of his mother as its specifically objectionable feature. Moreover (as in excerpts 1 and 2), the efficacy of Arno's utterances as enticements to a confrontational response seems to trade on the recipient's social position relative to the derogatory comments. That is, having initially (and, unlike the recipients in excerpts 1 and 2) declined to respond to a series of insults targeting him, Bheki becomes a more active participant in the conflict by way of defending his female kin (his mother) against an insult, thereby treating this insult as a more compelling basis for engaging in a conflict than the previous insults against himself. In this way, both Arno (in his production of this insult as an escalated alternative to the preceding series) and Bheki (in responding to it, having withheld responses to those that preceded it) treat gender, in combination with a kinship category, as a powerful resource for provoking a response from a co-protagonist in a conflict.

Having secured Bheki's participation in the conflict, Arno continues to escalate it, making repeated use of two distinct resources in doing so. The first of these is the question "Wat wil jy maak?" ("What do you want to do?"), and variations thereof (see lines 12, 14, 19, 21, and 23-24; also see previous deployments at lines 1 and 3). His use of this question appears to be designed to pursue not just a verbal response from Bheki but an act of physical violence on his part, with Arno thereby orienting to a violent response by Bheki as something that would warrant

his own production of reciprocal violence against Bheki – as opposed to producing physical violence without Bheki having done so first, and thereby potentially being seen as the aggressor.

The second resource Arno uses in escalating the conflict is further production and upgrading of gendered insults, beginning with a repetition of the insult against Bheki's mother (line 14), followed by a modified repetition of this insult with an intensifier (line 17), the use of profanity directed at both Bheki and his mother (line 24), and subsequent elaboration thereof to include other kinship categories while particularly emphasizing female categories (lines 26-27). Arno thereby continues to treat gendered kinship as a resource for provoking a violent response from Bheki. Moreover, Bheki continues to display a similar orientation by producing a series of escalating responses following his initial response at line 11, repeating this response in a more animated manner (line 13), before upgrading it with increased volume (lines 15-16) and directly addressing Arno (albeit with the respectful address term "Papa" – thereby further displaying his orientation to a status asymmetry between himself and Arno) at line 18. It is noteworthy that Bheki's responses, although observably escalating, specifically object only to Arno's use of gendered insults, while not responding to the challenge "What do you want to do?", even when responding to turns by Arno that only include this challenge (lines 13 and 22). Bheki thus resists taking up the invitation to fight conveyed by Arno's suggestion of the availability of a (violent) course of action that Bheki may "want" to pursue as a remedy to Arno's conduct but has thus far withheld. Bheki thereby implicitly displays a similar orientation to that of Arno (as described above) with respect to the significance of which party is the first to produce a violent action. His resistance of the violent trajectory invited by Arno is then completed when he first de-escalates his objections by lowering the volume at which he speaks (line 22), and then returning to his

prior withholding of responses (lines 25, 28 and 30), despite Arno's abovementioned continuing pursuits of a violent response from him.

The excerpts in this section, taken together with those in the preceding section, thus demonstrate participants' use of various "risk factors", and their intersections with the social positions of the participants (i.e., as the producer of an objectionable action, its target, a member of kin of its target, and so on), as resources for prospectively projecting, and/or pursuing, and/or building a warrant or account for violence – even in cases (such as excerpt 4) where the trajectory toward violence is ultimately averted. While violence thus remains a contingent possibility in the types of cases we have examined thus far, we turn in the following sections to the role of "risk factors" in cases in which violent outcomes are actually realized.

Producing Violent Actions

In this section we consider how "risk factors" can serve as resources for warranting or accounting for violent actions in the moments immediately preceding or during the course of producing the violent action. Excerpt 5 demonstrates how gender can be used in this way in the context of a conflict between a man and a woman who are evidently in a romantic relationship. In order to adequately contextualize the production of a violent action in this case, we must briefly flag some of the ways in which the conflict is escalated in the moments preceding the violence (cf. the analyses of excerpts 3 and 4 above): Prior to the transcribed portion of the video, Abby (the female partner) has criticized Brian for failing to engage in social activities with her, and for not talking to her. In defending himself against these criticisms, Brian uses a claim that he is not "out there...cheatin'" (line 1), thereby initiating an expanded sequence in which Abby repeatedly claims a desire for Brian to "cheat" (lines 3, 5 and 8), Brian threatens to

carry out this action (lines 6-7, 12 and 14), and Abby claims that he is “too pussy” to do so (line 10). The conflict is thereby successively escalated through the mobilization and subversion of gendered norms with respect to (male) (in)fidelity in relationships, as well as through both participants’ use of gendered (lines 2, 10 and 12) and racialized (line 7) insults.

The escalation of the conflict then continues with a more implicit gendered tone, as Abby laughingly challenges Brian’s ability to carry out his threat to cheat on the basis of not having a car (lines 15-16), thereby possibly subtly undermining his masculinity, as well as invoking a class-related asymmetry on the basis of his non-possession of this type of material resource. In response, Brian claims that he will make use of Abby’s car (lines 17-18), thereby both confirming the asymmetry between himself and Abby based on her possession of the resource he has been noted as lacking, and denying the relevance of this asymmetry by claiming access to Abby’s car for the purpose of carrying out his threat. Abby in turn counters this threat by denying that Brian will have the access to her car he has proposed (lines 19-20). Up to this point in the exchange, despite the numerous escalatory actions based on gender, race and class on the part of both participants, there has been no observable projection by either party of a violent outcome. Instead, the possibility of sexual infidelity has been treated as a terminal point of the conflict. This trajectory rapidly shifts, however, when Brian threatens to have sex with another woman in Abby’s car (line 21), with his emphasis and raised pitch on the word “in” treating this threat as an escalation of his prior threats of infidelity and his claim of access to Abby’s car to facilitate carrying them out. Brian thereby transforms his threat from one of “mere” infidelity – which, as noted above, Abby has claimed to be in favor of (even if there may be reason in this context to doubt the sincerity of this claim) – to one incorporating an additional element of personal humiliation against Abby through the performance of the infidelity in her car.

(5) [225 - "No u won't fuck.a bitch in my car"; 00:36-01:01]

01 B: AT LEAST I AIN'T OUT THERE FUCKIN' CHEATIN' ON YOUR
02 [BITCH ASS!]
03 A: [I WISH YOU] WOULD!
04 (.)
05 A: [I wish you would!]
06 B: [() I WILL] GO AND CHEAT ON YOUR FUCKIN'
07 NI[GGER ASS!]
08 A: [WISH YOU] would!
09 (.)
10 A: You WON'T cause you're too pussy (and/now)
11 [>(don't wanna) do anything!<]
12 B: [Watch, bitch, I] will!
13 (.)
14 B: Don't fuckin' te[st me!
15 A: [You ai]n't got no fuck(h)i(h)n' c(h)ar!
16 uh heh heh [heh!]
17 B: [I don't give a ↑fuck, I'll take yer car
18 [(and run the street!)]
19 A: [No you WON'T] take nobody's car cause you ain't
20 [drivin' my shit no more!]
21 B: [(I'll get a) I'll go] fuck the bitch ↑in your ↓car!
22 (1.0) ((A swivels around on bed and jumps on top of B))
23 A: Wh[at the] FUCK, DID YOU JUST mother↑fucking say tuh me!
24 B: [Bitch!] ((A on top of B apparently grabbing his throat/face))
25 A: Mm hu[h? Wh[at the]↑FUCK (would say that?)
26 B: [Bitch!] [TALK SHIT! TALK SHIT! I COULD TALK SHIT
27 TOO, [MOTHERFUCKER!] ((A takes hands off B and moves backward))

28 A: [.HHH H] ((sobbing))
29 (.)
30 B: "GO CHEAT MOTHERFUCKER." ((B pushes A back to other side of bed))

Immediately after Brian's utterance of the word "car" in this escalated threat, Abby (who has been seated next to Brian but facing away from him) begins to turn her body to face Brian and reach toward him with her right hand, before lunging toward him, eventually straddling his body while apparently grabbing or punching his face or neck. The timing of this action, produced by Abby immediately after Brian's preceding utterance, treats his threat as the proximate "cause" of her physical attack on him. Moreover, following the one-second pause during which these events unfold, Abby calls Brian to account for what he has just said, thereby explicitly treating his preceding threat as warranting her in-progress violent actions (lines 23 and 25).

After producing two further gendered expletives against Abby (lines 24 and 26), Brian then accounts for his threats as responsive to Abby's prior talk (lines 26-27, 30, and 32), thereby retrospectively treating her prior escalations of the conflict as proximal bases for the threat that resulted in her violent response. As Brian does this, Abby withdraws from her offensive position and Brian pushes her away, after which no further physical contact between them occurs in the video of the exchange. Thus, although the violence that occurs in this case is not explicitly projected or threatened by either party prior to its initiation, both parties treat it during its production as being underpinned by the preceding escalation of the conflict implemented (as described above) through the intersecting deployment of gender, race and class-related resources.

In the following case (as demonstrated in the analyses of excerpts 1 and 3 above), violence has already been projected as a potential outcome, but the violent actions that are ultimately produced are treated as being proximally underpinned by Alberto's repetition of the

racial slur that served to initiate the conflict (see excerpt 1). In the moments immediately preceding these violent actions, Alberto continues to resist the other participants' calls for him to leave the bus (lines 39 and 41), while Fred and Bob continue their respective efforts to cajole him to leave the bus and to seek support from the driver in doing so (lines 40 and 43). In the wake of this apparent impasse, and possibly touched off by another passenger's apparent (partially inaudible) report of Alberto's earlier production of the racial slur (line 45), Alberto again utters the offending term (line 47). In this sequential context, with Alberto having been challenged on his earlier uses of the term, and having been directed to leave the bus as a result, Alberto's repetition of the slur is an openly aggressive and defiant action – particularly given that he produces it while Bob is standing in a confrontational position in front of him.

(6) [44 – “Black Man Knock Mexican Out For Using The N Word”; 00:38-00:48]

38 (0.7)

39 A: [(Oh you do-)] ((slurring))

40 F: [>(It's/this) your stop, right here.]

41 A: You think so? ((slurring))

42 (1.2)

43 B: MA'AM, DO YOU WANT HIM OFF, COULD YOU JUST SAY YES OR NO?

44 (0.2)

45 D: (Cos he yelled “nigger,”)

46 (0.8)

47 A: N[^]igger!

48 (0.5) ((B removes right hand from handrail and swings arm backward))

49 (A): Yo, whoa! ((B slaps A))

Immediately following this utterance (during the 0.5-second pause at line 48), Bob releases the handrail he has been holding with his right hand while standing in front of Alberto, swings his arm backward, and slaps Alberto on the left side of his face, with Alberto's utterance at line 49 apparently displaying his recognition of the impending slap. Thus, although Bob does not verbally link this violent action, in the course of producing it, to what Alberto has just said (as was the case in excerpt 5), the timing of the action is visibly responsive to Alberto's utterance of the same racial slur that occasioned the initiation of the conflict. The defiant repetition of the slur is thereby available as an implicit account for the violence that immediately follows it.

Retrospectively Accounting for Violent Actions

In this final section we consider how “risk factors” may be deployed as participants' resources in the immediate aftermath of violent actions, beginning with the continuing unfolding of the case shown in excerpts 1, 3 and 6. Having just completed his production of the slap shown in excerpt 6, Bob produces a partially repeated variation of the same challenge he produced in response to Alberto's use of the racial slur earlier in the exchange (see excerpt 1, line 5). This repetition of his challenge, the force of which is heightened by the increased volume and use of profanity compared to the previous iteration at line 5, displays Bob's outrage at Alberto's immediately preceding utterance, and thereby constitutes the slap as a remedy for the epithet he treats as having been directed at him. Thus, in combination with its timing (as described in the previous section), this utterance renders Bob's violent action recognizable as a response to a racist action by Alberto – with its recognizability as such further evidenced by the causal logic embedded in the title given to the video: “Black Man Knock Mexican Out For Using The N Word”.

(7) [44 – “Black Man Knock Mexican Out For Using The N Word”; 00:48-01:15]

50 B: MAN WHO YOU CALLI[N' A GODDAM]N NIGGER, [↑MAN?]
51 A: [WHO:::A:::!] [Whoa!]
52 B: WHO YOU CALLIN' A NIGGER?
53 A: (Whoa::) ((B slaps A))
54 B: HUH?
55 A: Hoah! [(That's)]
56 B: [WHO YOU CALLIN' A NIGGER,] MAN?
57 A: (Okay, don't ea:s[y, e]a::s)
58 D: [(Go.)
59 D: >Get off the bus. (line,) get off the b[us.<]
60 A: [Ooh:]:
61 uh hoo uhoo uhoo uhoo uhoo uhoo ((sobbing))
62 (0.6)
63 A: Ho[o : : : : : : : : (f]ugg it)
64 D: [(>Get him off man. Gonna get off.<)]
65 B: HEY MA'AM, YOU- DO YOU WANT HIM OFF?
66 A: .h[hh hee::h hh] hh
67 G: [(>What do I have to say?<)]
68 G: ()
69 B: (An') don't you NEVER in your LIFETIME, YOU HEAR ME?
70 (0.3)
71 B: DO YOU ↑HEAR ME?
72 (0.8)
73 B: YOU ↑BETTER HEAR ME, YOUR DRUNK ASS!

As this exchange continues, Bob pursues a response to his challenge, treating Alberto's utterances at line 51 as inadequate responses by producing a shortened version of the same question (line 52). Immediately after this, he slaps Alberto for a second time, thereby producing the action projected by his challenge, with the challenge in this case thus prospectively accounting for the violent action, in contrast to the retrospective account provided by its previous iteration (cf. excerpts 5 and 6). Bob then produces further retrospective accounts for this action with additional pursuits of a response from Alberto (lines 54 and 56). Then, following further pursuits of the efforts to remove Alberto from the bus, interspersed with Alberto's displays of emotion in response to Bob's violent actions (lines 57-68), Bob produces further pursuits of a response from Alberto that simultaneously reinforce the race-based accounts for his previous violent actions (lines 69, 71 and 73). Particularly noteworthy here is Bob's mention, in the third of these pursuits (line 73), of Alberto's intoxicated state, thereby making explicit his recognition of drunkenness as a contributing factor to the actions Alberto has produced, and providing retrospective evidence for his and other participants' orientations to the relevance of alcohol intoxication earlier in the exchange (see excerpt 3).

A further case of a retrospective account for violence, this time in a case in which the violence was not clearly prospectively projected, is shown in excerpt 8. The bulk of the video prior to the transcribed portion (as reflected in the title of the video) has shown a fight between a male and female participant in the presence of a number of onlookers who have (again, consistent with the title of the video) responded to the fight as having been "won" by the female protagonist. Despite having being treated as the defeated party, the male protagonist (Brandon) is summoned (lines 1, 3, and 5) by another (male) participant (Anthony), who sanctions him for

“fightin’ a girl” (line 7) and cuts off his protestation that his opponent has initiated the fight with a punch to his face (line 8).

(8) [255 – “Girl fights guy and win”; 01:42-01:58]

01 A: Hey little bruh, c’mere real qui:ck.
02 (1.2)
03 A: C’mere real quick, little bro.
04 C: Heh heh heh!
05 A: C’mere.
06 (0.5)
07 A: ↑What ↓you doin’ fightin’ a girl, bruh?
08 B: NAH, SHE HI- >SH- N- SHE STARTED IT- ((A punches B’s face))
09 A: NIGGA DON’T F- BE FIGHTIN’ NO GIRL, NIGGA, (wh) fuck is
10 wro:ng wit’ you:?
11 (0.2)
12 D: hh heh heh! .hh
13 A: YOU TELL YO’ DADDY I DID THAT NIGGA, DON’T BE FIGHTIN’ NO
14 GIRL (OU’ HERE,) NIGGA!

While the laughter produced by the person filming the exchange (Chris; line 4) may be evidence of an implicit orientation to impending violence by Anthony against Brandon, the punch Anthony produces is not explicitly projected prior to its production. However, Anthony’s gender-based sanctioning of Brandon provides a prospective warrant for this violent action, which he subsequently reinforces with injunctions against fighting “girls” immediately following the punch (line 9) and shortly thereafter (lines 13-14). The second of these also notably includes a directive for Brandon to report to his father that Anthony punched him, which effectively

categorizes Brandon as a child, and thus as a member of a category that is in need of instruction, thereby treating the use of violence against him as a form of education. This reference to Brandon's "daddy" also positions Anthony as a stand-in for this parental category, thereby justifying his violence in terms of the parent-child relationship, which is (in the United States) the only relationship in which violence is state-sanctioned (i.e., it is legal for a parent to hit a child as punishment). A gendered norm is thus deployed in this case both to sanction a participant's preceding actions, thereby prospectively accounting for violence against him, and thereafter to retrospectively account for the violent action following its production. In addition, along with the gendered terms ("bruh" and "bro") repeatedly employed by Anthony toward Brandon (lines 1, 3, and 7), which further display his orientation to gender throughout the exchange, Anthony's use of the racialized term of address, "nigga" (lines 9, 13, and 14), may be evidence for an orientation on Anthony's part to the intersecting relevance of race with respect to the norm he has invoked – although in this context it may simply be designed as an address term.

Discussion

Our analysis demonstrates how social asymmetries such as racism and sexism (in the form of idealized masculinity), and drug or alcohol intoxication, which have been extensively documented as "distal" and/or "proximal" correlates of reported violence, can be observably produced in projected and realized enactments of violence itself. Specifically, and in contrast to Collins' (2008, 2009) focus on emotional thresholds, we have demonstrated how features of unfolding interactions can occasion the *use* of "risk factors" by participants as *resources* for the initiation, escalation and de-escalation of conflicts, and as (prospective or retrospective) warrants for producing violent actions. We have thereby demonstrated that this reification of "risk" in

violent interactions is not formulaically predictable, but rather is dynamically shaped by the moment-by-moment contingencies of the immediate contexts in which participants act. Our analysis thus shows that what may appear to be immutable pathways to violence may not be realized as such, and that the moment-by-moment actions of protagonists can quickly escalate mundane scenarios into physically violent exchanges.

Importantly, our fine-grained analyses of unfolding (potentially) violent interactions challenge the ontological distinctions evident in the public health literature discussed above between “risk factors” and violent outcomes. While epidemiological research has rigorously modeled the associations between risks and outcomes, our findings indicate that “risk factors” should be considered as more than just placeholders for variable processes and individual characteristics that intersect to produce violence. Instead, their deployment as participants’ resources for initiating, escalating, avoiding, and explaining violence effectively dissolves the conceptual distinctions between risks and outcomes, with factors associated with “risk” actually being observable as constitutive features of the contingent trajectories of violent exchanges.

Lastly, our findings indicate the situational detail required to better identify “closure in violent events” (Wilkinson & Hamerschlag, 2005, p. 334). Our analysis suggests that while the end-points of exchanges replete with “risk factors” are never fixed, key interactional processes are observably coupled to (potentially) violent outcomes. For example, escalation following a precipitant event seems to systematically characterize interactions in which violence is projected and/or realized, and “risk factors” serve as participants’ resources for producing this escalation.

Limitations

Our analysis was limited by the recordings typically only capturing exchanges beginning at a point after a conflict was already in progress, resulting in uncertainty as to the details of the events that resulted in the initiation of the conflict. However, these limitations result from the videos being “organic products of a localized interest in an encounter or series of events”, with researchers having no involvement in decision-making with respect to any of the details of their production (Jones & Raymond, 2012, p. 112), and it is these very features that make the videos unique sources of evidence about interactions that would tend not to be captured by more traditional methods of data collection. Furthermore, research based on naturalistic video data of the type we have examined has faced methodological questions relating to the degree to which the participants’ conduct may have been shaped by the presence of the camera, and the ways in which the videographer’s standpoint may influence the details and perspectives available for analysis in the videos (Jones & Raymond, 2012). However, as Jones and Raymond (2012) have noted, a substantial body of research based on recordings of naturalistic interactions has suggested that in many cases participants completely ignore the presence of the recording equipment, and in cases in which they do attend to it (none of which were apparent in the exchanges we have examined above), the ways in which it shapes their behavior become observable and can be built into analyses of their conduct (Hazel, 2016).

Research Implications

Our study has highlighted the analytic and theoretical value of focusing on the situational and interactional dimensions of violence. In this regard, it is noteworthy that contemporary video recording, storage and retrieval technologies enable researchers to privilege violent enactments over reported or measured correlates and consequences of violence as empirical targets. This

study harnesses the analytic potential of these technologies in providing a more fine-grained, composite and direct picture of the complexities of violence. By closely examining how violent interactions unfold, the analytic focus is moved away from a view of upstream “risk factors” as determinants of violent outcomes, and toward the social and moral logics participants use to make sense of and act in everyday situations. Further research on the roles and functions of these apparently systematic interactional processes would contribute to violence studies by examining precisely how the now well-established inventory of “risk factors” for violence may intersect to produce or diffuse the situational conditions for violent outcomes.

Policy Implications

Our fine-grained analyses highlight recurrent interactional processes that shape trajectories toward or away from violent outcomes. As such, our findings, and those of further research based on a similarly detailed interactional focus, could inform a range of behavioral interventions that provide tools for recognizing and de-escalating incipient conflicts in everyday interactions.

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Appendix: Transcription Symbols (adapted from Jefferson, 2004)

- (0.6) Numbers in parentheses indicate time elapsed to the nearest tenth of a second.
- (.) A period in parentheses indicates a brief interval (approximately one tenth of a second).
- [A left bracket indicates onset of overlapping talk.
-] A right bracket indicates at which overlapping talk ends.
- . A full-stop indicates falling or final intonation.
- , A comma indicates continuing intonation.
- ? A question mark indicates rising or questioning intonation.
- ! An exclamation mark indicates an animated tone.
- ↑↓ Arrows indicate shifts into especially high or low pitch.
- wo::rd Colons indicate prolongation of the immediately preceding sound, with more colons indicating longer prolongation.
- word Underlining all or part of a word indicates stress, via pitch and/or amplitude.

- (words) Words in parentheses indicates uncertain hearing and/or speaker designation, and represent the transcriber’s best guess at what was said and/or who said it.
- (word/word) Words in parentheses separated by a slash represent alternative possible uncertain hearings.
- () Spaces in parentheses indicate untranscribable talk, with longer spaces reflecting longer durations of untranscribable talk.
- ((words)) Words in double parentheses indicate transcribers’ descriptions.
- WORDS Capitalization indicates utterances that are markedly louder than surrounding talk.
- °words° Degree signs enclose utterances that are markedly quieter than surrounding talk.
- >words< Inward pointing “greater than” and “less than” symbols enclose talk that is produced markedly more quickly than surrounding talk.
- <words> Outward pointing “greater than” and “less than” symbols enclose talk that is produced markedly more slowly than surrounding talk.
- word- A dash indicates a cut-off.
- .hhh Dot-prefixed “h”s indicate an in-breath; “h”s without a dot indicate an out-breath.
- w(h)ords Parenthesized “h”s indicate plosiveness, associated with laughter, crying, etc.
- words* Italicized words indicate English translations of talk produced in other languages, with the translated text being placed on the line below the text it translates.